

Zomato Delists 5K FSSAI Non-Complaint Restaurants

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E-Paper

Foodtech unicorn Zomato has delisted over 5,000 restaurants which were not compliant with standards set by national food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). According to the company, it had participated in the ongoing audit along with the regulator of all the restaurants listed on the platform across the 150 cities where it is operational. Zomato also added that the number of compliant restaurants on its platform has increased by over 30K in the past 6 months as it had been trying to educate its restaurant partners FSSAI license.



It claimed to have taken initiatives such as FSO training sessions, helpline numbers and DIY compliance kits to help the restaurant partners obtain certification. It also shared a repository of best practices with them to further sensitize them about the issue. The delisted partners will be however allowed to work again if they meet the FSSAI standard and obtain the licence, Zomato said. “We are adding 400 restaurants to our platform every day; so it is crucial that our restaurant partners are compliant with regulations and hygiene standards. For this reason, we have been re-evaluating all the 80K restaurants listed on Zomato, helping them be compliant, and delisting those that have failed to follow regulations in spite of continuous efforts,” said Mohit Gupta, CEO, food delivery business, Zomato. This announcement comes at a time when rival Swiggy has been facing heat from the consumers after a Chennai-based user discovered bloody bandaid in his food.

In July 2018, FSSAI had directed 10 online food delivery platforms to debar food business operators (FBOs) that don’t have a license obtained from the regulator.

The order was made after it received a series of complaints related to sub-standard food being supplied by food businesses listed on the major food delivery platforms. In October 2018, after the regulator conducted a review on the progress made by the companies, the data revealed that nearly 5K non-complaint restaurants had been delisted by 10 online food delivery platforms including Zomato, Swiggy, UberEats, FoodPanda among others. In December 2018, the regulator had also issued revised guidelines to keep a check on the ecommerce food companies. The new guidelines said that the food products offered for sale are liable to sampling at any point in the supply chain. The foodtech companies will also need to provide an indicative image of the food on their platforms so that consumers can recognise the product.

In 2017, Zomato had introduced Food Hygiene Ratings for the listed restaurants. Under this plan, the company works with third party auditors who conduct surprise physical food hygiene audits at participating restaurants and rate them. The company also added that all its high order receiving restaurants are already compliant with the safety guidelines and hence this will not affect its business.